

Writing Response Groups: Feedback Guidelines



To make the most of your time together, your group may want to consider following these steps as you respond to one another:

The Writer/Reader:

1. Briefly explains that background of the piece. (Optional)
2. Asks for specific feedback.
3. Reads the piece exactly as it is written.
4. Asks clarifying questions of the responders.
5. Listens to what all group members have to say.
6. Writes or considers feedback responders provide.

The Responders:

1. Listen to the writer, and jot down ideas to share.
2. Begin with *specific* praise.
3. Ask clarifying questions when parts are unclear or underdeveloped.
4. Offer suggestions.

Things to Avoid:

1. Letting the writer talk too much before he/she begins reading the piece.
2. Thinking the writer must take your suggestions. You can suggest, but all final decisions about writing belong to the writer.
3. Telling the writer how his/her experience relates to an incident in your own life and turning the attention on *yourself* instead of the writer.
4. Expecting the writer to answer all of the questions the group asks of him/her. It is okay to answer clarifying questions, but the writer should be able to listen to feedback and suggestions without having to orally respond to each.
5. Getting sidetracked into a discussion of the experience itself, in place of a discussion of the actual writing.

Final Tip: Strive to achieve a balance of support and suggestion!